

***Fostering professional connections across spaces: An
evaluative study of a co-constructed school-based
initiative within a
Graduate Teacher Education qualification***

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Initial Teacher Education Context

- International Research in ITE on Effective Practices
 - shared vision of effective teaching
 - clear standards of performance
 - curricular coherence
 - extensive use of high-leverage strategies
 - *extended practice experiences*
 - *strong school-university relationship*
- Challenges of School-University Relationships
 - substance & nature of relationships
 - mutually-beneficial & equal partnerships
- Practice-focused Approach to ITE
 - strengthen relationship of coursework & practice experiences
 - engage with 'materials' of teaching to make meaning of core professional concepts



Documentary Account of Innovation: Description and Evaluation

Home School Initiative

- Introduced a new practice-focused learning component to the revised GradDipTchLn (Primary);
- Co-constructed initiative with CPPA Executive as a specific outgrowth of collaborative partnership;
- Collaborative evaluation process with CPPA as co-researchers to examine outcomes;
- Targeted one of the 'central tasks' of professional learning for ITE (Feiman-Nemser, 2001):

***Analysing own beliefs and forming initial visions for teaching,
including their professional stance as educators.***



Home School Initiative: Purpose

- **Strengthening partnerships** between schools
- Providing **increased opportunities for students** to observe teachers in action, have professional dialogue with teachers and school leaders, and experience working with staff, students and parents/caregivers **in a school environment**;
- Providing increased **opportunities for students to work in a wider variety of schools**, and observe/interact with a wider range of children across the different levels of the school;
- Enabling students to make **theory-practice connections** in the courses they are undertaking in the first semester of study;
- Providing **mutually-beneficial support to schools** in areas they identify by having the students can support teachers and learners in regular and/or special school activities; and
- Enabling students to **ensure** they have **made the right decision to enter the teaching profession** by better experiencing working with staff, students and parents/caregivers in a school environment.



Home School Initiative: Structure

- Students have 1-day per week for 5 weeks in a school
- Work in pairs
- No set tasks, rather weekly focus questions linked to courses to guide observation and action
- UC staff in PI course prepare students each week for upcoming experience
- Schools engage students in “the life of the school” by developing a weekly plan/schedule; there is no expectation for school staff to conduct assessment
- Schools plan the experience so as to also support their initiatives
- Programme Coordinator and PI staff liaise with each school and serve as key contact as needed



Summary of Weekly Course Content Overviews

Week in school (8:30-3:30 each day)	TEPI331 Professional and Educational Studies 1	TEPI333 Ngā Āhutatanga Māori and Learning Languages	TECP331 English Literacy and Mathematics Education 1	TECP332 Future Focussed Education: Science, Technology, Digital Literacy
Thursday 6 March	Child Development Analytical Observation and questioning in educational settings	LL Working with children from language backgrounds other than English NAM Historical overview te reo Māori, endangered languages, pronunciation and greetings/farewells in te reo Māori	Characteristics of a good maths lesson, beginning pedagogy Conceptions of literacy Literacy in New Zealand	Philosophy and Nature of science and technology. Challenges for 21 st Century Digital tools and environments
Thursday 13 March	Theories of Learning Culturally responsive pedagogies	LL Language teaching in NZ – an overview NAM Teaching documents for te reo Māori and mihi mihi	Practical applications for Strand teaching- Measurement Phonological awareness for beginning readers	Authentic practice in Science and Technology Models of science and technology Practice Overview of digital literacy and citizenship
Thursday 20 March	Planning for Effective Teaching Assessment for Learning	LL Theories and approaches in second language teaching and learning NAM Second language acquisition strategies for the classroom and actions/commands in te reo	NZC Learning area, Mathematics and supporting materials to aid lesson planning Introduction to Literacy approaches/ Shared Reading	Skills, attitudes and knowledge: Making links to the NZC. Planning a learning pathway 21 st century digital tools

Example Weekly Focus Questions

Visit 1: 6 March (NZ Curriculum & Child Development)

2. In your interactions and observations of students today, make note of the physical, social/emotional and cognitive characteristics of one particular age group. What surprises you? What questions arise? Take a copy of the developmental characteristic pages (junior-middle-senior) from Module 3 with you. Use these to prompt your observations and highlight the characteristics you observe- we will discuss the implications of these)

Visit 2: 13 March (Theories of Learning and Culturally Responsive Pedagogies)

2. What Māori values to you see being encouraged in this school (refer back to *Tātaiako* for the overview) How are these explored, modelled and encouraged within the school? What evidence do you see of how the school actively support students from diverse cultural contexts?

Visit 5: 3 April (Classroom and Behaviour Management)

1. Please have a conversation with a school leader/staff member: what school-wide systems are in place to manage behaviour and how were these established?



Example Student School Schedule

Timetable:

	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9
8.30-8.45	Sign in; touch base with A for the day/ review questions/focus. Visit Breakfast Club (Week 6)				
8.45-11.10	Meet with Principal/Walk around school with Andrea. Go to Room 2 (JB).	Room 11, Year 5/6 (BL)	Room 3 (VW)	Room 4 NI (DB)	Room 8, Year 3/4 (KW)
11.30-12.45	Room 2 (JB)	Room 11	Room 3	Room 4 (DB) Visit Lunch Club with Andrea.	Room 8
1.30-3.15	Room 2 (JB) 2.30pm Observe Year 3 EOTC with A.	Room 11/Possible visit to Conductive Education.	<i>Wise Up (in the Hall) – Socialization programme for a select group with A.</i>	Room 4 (DB)	Room 8 2.45pm Debrief of visit with A.
3.15-3.30	Touch base with A/ introduce to next week's teacher/s. Sign out.				

Collaborative Evaluation Framework

- CPPA Executive Team—two members serve as co-researchers
- Survey of Principals in Home Schools
 - Four questions using Survey Monkey
- Data from GradDip Students
 - Learn Site Forum—4 open-ended questions
 - Focus Groups as follow up
- UC Researchers summarise data to remove identifying information
- Shared analysis with CPPA co-researchers
- Report back to all stakeholders (principals, students, staff)



Evaluation Outcomes To Date

- In process—ethical approval for research involving students requires full review; slower than anticipated
- Feedback from PI and course staff
 - see students making specific links from experiences to course concepts and content
 - Students' discourse appears to shift from concerns for their performance/learning to that of students
 - Have had two students indicate early that teaching not the “right” choice



Next Steps in Evaluation: Identify Lessons Learned & Revise/Refine

- **Partnership**
 - How does this initiative strengthen relationships?
 - What benefits to schools gain?
- **Practice-focused experience in ITE**
 - How does this 5 week experience contribute to ITE students' ability to link theory to practice?
 - What 'materials of teaching' do they have the opportunity to engage with in these contexts?
- **Centralising task for ITE**
 - What beliefs and ideas about teaching do the ITE students confront and grapple with?
 - How well do the guiding questions scaffold ITE student engagement with challenging concepts and their own beliefs?

